



**STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITIES & OPERATIONS**

The VCC has a number of responsibilities under the *Coastal Management Act 1995* including the provision of ongoing advice to the Minister and preparing a draft Victorian Coastal Strategy. The Council will actively contribute to the development of key government policy and planning including *Protecting Victoria’s Environment – Biodiversity 2036*, *Plan Melbourne Refresh*, and *Victoria’s Water Plan*.

Additional statutory responsibilities include the approval of Regional Coastal Board plans and providing opportunities for public involvement in the work of the Council. The VCC also convenes a Science Panel to support evidence based decision making and the identification of emerging coastal and marine issues of state-wide importance. The Council will continue to review its operations and processes to improve efficiency and effectiveness.

**REPORTING & ACCOUNTABILITY**

In accordance with the *Coastal Management Act 1995*, the VCC is accountable to the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change. It reports on the achievement of commitments in its Business Plan and on the implementation of the VCS in its Annual Report and the VCS Mid-term Review.

The Council respectfully acknowledges and pays respect to Victoria’s Traditional Owners as the custodians of the land on which we live, and their rich culture and intrinsic connection to country.

**THE COUNCIL**

The Victorian Coastal Council (VCC) is established under the *Coastal Management Act 1995* and is accountable to the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change. It consists of 9 members appointed by the Governor in Council on the recommendation of the Minister.

The VCC is provided with a budget and secretariat support through the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP).

**MEMBERS**

Chair: Dr Anthony Boxshall

Belinda Ainley, Michelle Croughan, Stacey Daniel, Cr Richard Ellis, Rob Gell AM, Ross Kilborn, Cr Jill Parker, Dr David Provis

**VCC SCIENCE PANEL**

The VCC Science Panel consists of 40+ senior scientists from across academic institutions, government agencies and the private sector. The Science Panel provides the VCC with scientific advice on significant coastal and marine issues to inform the work of the Council and its advice to the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change.



Quotes from Coastal and Marine Attitudes and Behaviours Report: Wave 4 (2012)





# KEY ISSUES FACING THE VICTORIAN COAST

Coastal and marine environments generate great social, environmental, cultural and economic benefits – Victorians cherish the coast, its beaches and the sea. Natural, built and social environments along the coast are under significant pressure due to population growth, climate change, competing demands for use, ageing infrastructure and complex governance arrangements.

Five key strategic challenges are identified in the *Victorian Coastal Strategy 2014* (VCS)

## MANAGING POPULATION GROWTH

An increase in permanent residents and visitors will continue to place pressure on Victoria’s coastal and marine environments. We need to plan for and manage population growth, recreational use of the coast and tourism in a way that protects and enhances coastal and marine environments for current and future generations.

## ADAPTING TO CLIMATE CHANGE

Our coastline is in a state of constant change due to natural coastal processes such as erosion and inundation. Climate change is expected to significantly increase the severity and frequency of coastal erosion, inundation and flooding. We need to coordinate our efforts to learn about, plan for and manage the significant impacts of climate change on both natural and built environments along the Victorian coast.

## MANAGING COASTAL LAND & INFRASTRUCTURE

The cost of developing, protecting and maintaining Victoria’s coastal infrastructure will continue to increase as a consequence of ageing assets, natural coastal processes, population growth and additional demand for recreation and tourism opportunities. These costs can be expected to increase significantly as climate change adaptation strategies are implemented. We need to develop sustainable, long-term financing strategies for Victoria’s coastal and marine assets.

## VALUING THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

The Victorian coast is made up of a diversity of ecosystems and habitats. These natural ecological systems are of intrinsic value and also provide a range of ‘goods and services’ that benefit the Victorian community in both social and economic terms. We need to better understand, appreciate and manage both the intrinsic and socio-economic value of Victoria’s coast and marine areas.

## INTEGRATING MARINE PLANNING

Victoria’s unique marine environment covers more than 10,000 square kilometers. Habitats include reefs, kelp forests, deep sponge gardens, sandy plains, seagrass meadows and open water. As a shared resource, our coastal waters are under pressure from an increasing level and variety of uses. We need to develop policy and planning frameworks to manage increasing, and sometimes competing, demands on Victoria’s marine environment.

## VISION FOR THE COAST:

‘A healthy coast, appreciated by all, now and in the future’

(Victorian Coastal Strategy 2014).

## ROLE OF THE VCC:

To play a leadership role in the realisation of the vision for Victoria’s coast by providing the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change and other key coastal and marine stakeholders with independent, evidence-based advice on significant coastal and marine policy, planning and management issues and by working with partners and stakeholders to implement the Victorian Coastal Strategy.

(The full functions of the Council are specified in the *Coastal Management Act 1995*)

# VCC PRIORITIES 2015–18

The priorities outlined in this business plan reflect the key issues, outcomes and actions contained in the *Victorian Coastal Strategy 2014* as well as emerging challenges and opportunities for Victoria’s coastal and marine environments.

Building on the VCS, the VCC has identified four strategic priorities for 2015–2018:

## 1 EFFECTIVE COASTAL AND MARINE PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

The Council pursues its objectives by working with and through a range of government, non-government, private sector and community-based organisations and recognises the fundamental importance of community engagement in the stewardship of Victoria’s coastal and marine environments. In this context, the Council has endeavoured to align its 2015-2018 priorities with those of key partners in the implementation of the VCS. These agencies include the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), Victoria’s three Regional Coastal Boards (RCBs), Parks Victoria, the Office of the Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability (OCES), and the Victorian Catchment Management Council (VCMC).

### 1. EFFECTIVE COASTAL & MARINE PLANNING & MANAGEMENT

A number of actions in the VCS focus on delivering better coastal planning and management and link with the development of a new Marine and Coastal Act (MACA) and associated institutional arrangements.

Key projects:

- a) Contribute to the development of a new Marine and Coastal Act (MACA) and associated institutional arrangements for the future governance of Victoria’s coastal and marine environments (including the future role of the VCC)  
*Lead: DELWP/MACA Expert Panel**Support: VCC, RCBs*

b) Contribute to the development of integrated marine planning frameworks  
*Lead: DELWP/MACA Expert Panel**Support: VCC, VEAC*

c) Advocate for development of future funding and investment models for Victoria’s coastal and marine zones  
*Lead: VCC**Support: DELWP, DTF*

d) Develop and implement a Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting (MER) framework for the VCS. This will incorporate:

i. Monitoring and reporting on implementation of the VCS through the VCS Implementation Coordinating Committee (ICC)  
*Lead: VCC**Support: ICC, DELWP*

ii. Publishing a mid-term review of the VCS  
*Lead: VCC**Support: ICC, DELWP*

iii. Produce proposed indicators for the 'State of the Marine and Coast' report  
*Lead: VCC**Support: OCES, DELWP, ICC*

e) Revise the *Siting and Design Guidelines for Structures on the Victorian Coast*  
*Lead: VCC**Support: RCBs, LGs, DELWP, PV, HV, OVGA*

f) Develop the case for a "Coastal and Marine Capability Hub"  
*Lead: VCC**Support: OCES, DELWP*
- The VCC will also support:
- a) The operation of the VCS Implementation Coordinating Committee (ICC)  
*Lead: DELWP**Support: VCC*

b) Preparation of guidelines for Coastal Management Plans  
*Lead: DELWP**Support: VCC, RCBs, ICC*

c) Opportunities for networking and knowledge exchange between state, regional and local coastal communities, planners, managers and other stakeholders  
*Lead: RCBs**Support: VCC, CoMs, LGs, CMAs*

d) The development of frameworks for facilitation of tourism development along the coast (Visitation Demand Framework as per each of the Regional Coastal Plans)  
*Lead: RCBs**Support: VCC, LGs, PV, TV, RTBs, CoMs, DELWP*
- ### 2. PLANNING FOR & ADAPTING TO THE IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON THE COAST
- Planning for and adapting to the impacts of climate change on natural and built environments along the Victorian coast requires coordinated action across all levels of government. Actions in the VCS that support planning and adaptation include identifying Crown land reserves with values at risk from the impacts of climate change, reviewing and updating planning benchmarks for sea level rise as part of future reviews of the VCS, and investigating methods for deriving more detailed sea level planning allowances.
- Key projects:
- a) Contribute to the development of the Victorian Government’s Climate Change Framework and the Second Climate Change Adaptation Plan  
*Lead: DELWP**Support: VCC, RCBs*

b) Support development of planning tools for adaptation to the impacts of climate change on the coast  
*Lead: DELWP**Support: VCC*
- The VCC will also support:
- a) A review of the number and types (reservation status) of Crown land reserves along the Victorian coast and identification of reserves with high environmental, social and economic value that are at risk from the impacts of climate change  
*Lead: DELWP**Support: VEAC, VCC, RCBs*
- ## 3 UNDERSTANDING THE CONDITION OF COASTAL AND MARINE ENVIRONMENTS
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- Delivering a greater understanding of the condition of the coast is the focus for a number of actions in the VCS. These include the development of a framework for understanding and monitoring the health of Victoria’s coastal and marine environments. This work will be a major focus of the VCC Science Panel and involve collaboration with key partners including DELWP and the Office of the Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability (OCES).
- Key projects:
- a) Develop a framework for understanding, monitoring and reporting on the health of Victoria’s coastal and marine environments incorporating environmental, social and economic values that is aligned with the State & Benefit framework  
*Lead: VCC**Support: OCES, DELWP*

b) Contribute to the development of the *State of the Environment Report 2018* (including *State of the Bays Report* for Port Phillip and Western Port)  
*Lead: VCC**Support: OCES, DELWP, RCBs*
- The VCC will also support:
- a) The development and implementation of environmental value measurement systems and environmental accounts that are consistent with international systems  
*Lead: DELWP**Support: VCC*
- ### 4. STRONGER CONNECTIONS, ENGAGEMENT & ADVOCACY
- Achieved through a number of actions in the VCS that are focused on delivering stronger connections, engagement and advocacy on the future of Victoria’s coastal and marine environments. Actions include continuing longitudinal research on community attitudes and behaviours to coastal and marine environments; and hosting the *Victorian Coastal Awards for Excellence* and Australia’s national coastal conference (*Coast to Coast*) in Victoria.
- Key projects:
- a) Host the national coastal conference (*Coast to Coast*) in Victoria in 2016  
*Lead: VCC**Support: DELWP, Australian Coastal Society*

b) Pursue a partnership approach to the design and delivery of Wave 5 of the VCC’s longitudinal social research on community attitudes and behaviours to Victorian coastal and marine environments  
*Lead: VCC**Support: DELWP, PV*

c) Continue to recognise and reward community leadership and innovation through the *Victorian Coastal Awards for Excellence*. The VCC will review and refresh the Awards to strengthen the focus on inclusion and connections between Traditional Owners and coastal and marine environments  
*Lead: VCC**Support: DELWP, RCBs*

d) Showcase and promote strategies that enhance inclusion for people with disabilities in the coast and marine environment  
*Lead: VCC**Support: RCBs, DELWP, PV*

e) Develop and implement a Communications and Engagement Strategy to connect community with the work of the VCC, government and others in managing coastal and marine environments  
*Lead: VCC**Support: RCBs*
- The VCC will also support:
- a) New and existing regional coastal forums and networks  
*Lead: RCBs**Support: VCC, DELWP, RCBs, PV, LGs*
- #### ACRONYMS/KEY
- |       |   |
|-------|---|
| CMA   | Catchment Management Authority                      |
| CoM   | Committee of Management                             |
| DELWP | Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning |
| DTF   | Department of Treasury and Finance                  |
| HV    | Heritage Victoria                                   |
- |      |   |
|------|---|
| ICC  | Implementation Coordinating Committee                       |
| LG   | Local Government  |
| MACA | new Marine and Coastal Act                                  |
| OCES | Office of the Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability |
- |      |  |
|------|--|
| OVGA | Office of the Victorian Government Architect |
| PV   | Parks Victoria                               |
| RCB  | Regional Coastal Board                       |
| RTB  | Regional Tourism Board                       |
- |      |  |
|------|--|
| TV   | Tourism Victoria                           |
| VCC  | Victorian Coastal Council                  |
| VCS  | Victorian Coastal Strategy                 |
| VEAC | Victorian Environmental Assessment Council |
- 2015/16 ● 2016/17 ● 2017/18